



MONTANA LEGISLATIVE BRANCH

Legislative Fiscal Division

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Legislative Fiscal Analyst
CLAYTON SCHENCK

September 8, 2005

Mary Dalton, Administrator
Quality Assurance Division
2401 Colonial Drive
Helena, MT 59620-2953

Dear Ms. Dalton:

At it's June meeting, the Legislative Finance Committee voted to request updates on a number of projects and initiatives as discussed during HB2 deliberations by appropriations subcommittees and the legislature during the 2005 legislative session. This letter is to let you know that we will be requesting these updates within the general timetables envisioned by the legislature.

The updates are intended to be brief, informal performance updates, and accomplished in no more than 1 to 2 pages. Additional information is welcome, but the intent is to keep the reporting requirements simple and informative while not requiring extensive effort on the part of program managers. The committee is primarily interested in how the project or initiative is progressing, what issues you have encountered, and what the legislature can do to assist you during the interim in your efforts to meet your goals and/or to address any issues.

The following updates are requested.

Report on Medical Marijuana Act.

Attached are the request forms for each of the updates requested.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. If you have any general questions about this request, please contact Taryn Purdy at 5383, or at tpurdy@mt.gov. If you have questions about a particular update, please contact the LFD staff person listed.

Sincerely,
Clayton Schenck

cc: Joan Miles
Bert Freeman

Information Request – Legislative Finance Committee

Purpose

By September 23, 2005, please provide a 1-2 page summary on the projects/initiatives listed.

Specifically:

How is this initiative going? What are the results of your efforts? What problems have you encountered? How can the legislature assist in this effort or with issues that have arisen?

You may email your response to the LFD contact listed below.

Information

Agency: DPHHS

Division/Program: Quality Assurance Division

Subject: Medical Marijuana Act

LFD Contact: Steinbeck, Lois

Agency Contact: Mary E. Dalton, QAD Administrator - DPHHS (Please fill in agency contact person)

Specific Request for Information/Action as Discussed by the Legislature/Subcommittee During the Legislative Session

General report on fee amount to implement Medical Marijuana Act. I have attached Bert's Fiscal year end report.

Response

Using the specific components above, what are you doing with regard to this project/initiative and how is it going?

The initiative was fully implemented by the Department on January 2, 2005. The first registration cards were issued on January 20, 2005. The process is simple for both the patient and the patient's caregiver. The physician's forms are easy to understand and have not been an impediment to the patient's physician involvement.

What are the results so far?

The medical marijuana registry has been very successful. There are 153 patients and 58 caregivers on the registry. 93 physicians have participated. The Department has received and responded to approximately 10 law enforcement requests to verify a registration. Further statistics on medical conditions being treated with medical marijuana are outlined on the attached summary sheet. This summary sheet also includes the information about patients, caregivers, and physicians.

What challenges have arisen?

The Department's biggest challenge was estimating how many people would register with the program in order to determine the registration fee. The Department is required to make the registration program cost neutral. The fees were initially established at \$200 per year per

registrant based on the projected program cost. Physicians and caregivers are not charged a registration fee. The Department's projections were close on the registration numbers. However, some projected costs did not materialize, i.e., speaking requests from law enforcement or physician groups, a new printer for registration cards, etc. This left the program with approximately a \$7,000 surplus after operational expenses. In July 2005, the department dropped the registration fee to \$100 for new applicants and is granting a free registration for existing patients for this year only. This should balance the cost of operating the program and the revenue collection.

How can the legislature (Legislative Finance Committee) assist?

At this time the program is doing well and the Department does not foresee any request for assistance from the legislature.

Med/licensure/med marijuana report finance committee 0905